

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, March 28, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "FOOD AND DRUG SEIZURES." Facts from the Federal Food and Drug Administration, Washington, D. C.

---oooOooo---

Today's news letter from Washington -- and the Federal Food and Drug Administration -- continues the list of foods and drugs seized during January for violation of the Pure Food Law.

As you will recall, last week's report dealt with seizures of unwholesome food products -- such products as candy, dried fruits, nuts, fish and canned foods.

Today's report deals with drug products removed from the market during January. Drug products included chloroform -- 86 bottles of substandard chloroform; substandard hydrogen peroxide, to the amount of 280 bottles, short in volume and containing four times the amount of acetanilid declared on the label; four gallons of an oil vitamin product, containing less vitamin D than represented; and 350 boxes of a glandular preparation ("Endofollicolina") which was not of the strength claimed on the label.

Patent medicines taken off the market because they allegedly bore false and fraudulent therapeutic claims included Diatene, a diabetes medicine; McDonald's Crystalene, for dropsy, diabetes, and rheumatism; Renolin, a dangerous cinchophen preparation; and various others. The complete list is available from the Food and Drug Administration, for any one interested.

Criminal prosecutions, terminated in January, against manufacturers and shippers of food products which had violated the Food and Drugs Act brought fines against manufacturers of short weight butter, short weight peanut butter, and short weight honey. A cheese company was fined \$50 for manufacturing a so-called creamed old "English cheese" which, unfortunately for the manufacturer, owed its sharp flavor to added red pepper rather than to honest old age.

And still others -- dressed chickens, preserves containing moldy fruit, preserves low in fruit content, and stock feeds that did not conform to the label claims of composition.

Drug case terminations during the month involved shipments of pharmaceuticals below the official standards; patent medicines labeled with false and fraudulent therapeutic claims; and the usual number of tablets, cough sirups, salves, liniments, and so on that are taken off the market, as part of the routine work of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, because they do not conform with the regulations of the Pure Food Law.

So much for foods and drugs. Now, insecticides. Our correspondent suggests that we be on the watch particularly for clothes moth preparations that make extravagant claims on the label.

If you have a copy of the new leaflet on moth control, you have learned that no solution on the market "will absolutely and permanently mothproof fabrics." Nor does the simple smell of cedar faze a hungry clothes moth. This leaflet, as you have heard before, is Number 145, and you can get a copy from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

But back to our report from the Food and Drug Administration, which besides enforcing the Pure Food Law, enforces the Insecticide Act. And that's how the moth preparations happen to be included in today's letter.

"Notices of Judgement Under the Insecticide Act," for January, include a case involving misbranding of Cedar-Wood Moth Fumigators. The labeling of this article bore false and misleading representations regarding its effectiveness against moths and other insects, and failed to indicate the inert ingredients present.

Quoting directly, from the "Notices of Judgment";

"The article was alleged to be misbranded in that the following statements, appearing in the labeling, were false and misleading by reason of said statements, the article was labeled so as to deceive and mislead the purchaser in that they represented that the article, when used as directed, would act as an effective insecticide against clothes moths, ants, roaches, silver bugs, flies, bed bugs, and all other insects in the basement, pantry, ice box and kitchen, and all other insects; whereas the article" -- (How do you like all these legal phrases?) -- "Whereas the article, when used as directed, would not be effective for the said purposes."

Here are some of the "false and misleading statements" on the package label: "Cedar-Wood Fumigators for Clothes Closets Instant death to Moths and Larvae. . . . Burns like incense and smothers every stage of Moths . . . Directions Burn one piece every week in a cup or saucer, keeping clothes closet door closed."

There were a lot more "false and misleading" statements in a circular that accompanied the package -- but we'll end this item by reporting that the defendant pleaded guilty and the court imposed a fine.

So concludes today's report from the Federal Food and Drug Administration, Washington, D. C.

#####

